



Last Sunday's service at St Chad's was all about the Leprosy mission.

The fund raising aim this year is to provide a new and improved outpatient building at Muzaffarpur hospital in Bihar, India's poorest state. It is a place where people live in extreme poverty with few resources and sparse medical care. The leprosy rates are three times higher than anywhere else in India.

More than 600 people queue at the outpatient department each morning to see a doctor. Many travel for days to wait in the stifling heat and in monsoon rain they stand soaked.

The outpatient department is dilapidated and under resourced. Dedicated doctors and nurses work tirelessly in the confined area each day. There is very little privacy for patients and there are very limited toilet and washing facilities. Yet the clinical care and love they receive is second to none, Nobody is turned away.

At the service we were joined, on behalf of the Leprosy Mission, by Guy Willcock, the community partnership manager for central England and Wales.

He started his talk with an update on the research centre at Nepal (a project which we supported a couple of years ago). If left untreated, leprosy causes nerve damage. As a result, people affected by leprosy have frequent hospital stays to cure ulcers, which can take many months or even years to heal. Doctors can now make a kind of artificial scab which is used to dress the ulcer. Trials at the mountaintop Anandaban leprosy hospital, south of Kathmandu, have been promising, bringing hope to patients worldwide. It is hoped that the treatment will also help millions living with diabetes, who have an increased risk of amputation. As a diabetic myself I found this particularly interesting.

He then moved on to the hospital itself, showing us a film of the awful conditions there and the long queues of people arriving each day.



The hospital is a vital institution for those with leprosy across the entire state of Bihar and beyond. The existing Outpatient Department building is not fit for purpose and the spaces are too small to enable dignified patient care. The site is also highly vulnerable to flood risk every monsoon with much of the staff housing under water each year.

The Leprosy Mission is working on designs for a new Outpatient Department to better serve the hundreds of patients that visit everyday, and improve the hospital's healthcare provision. The new building will include a large waiting atrium, an increased number of state-of-the-art consultation rooms, and flood mitigation measures to reduce the risks and resulting damages that flooding currently presents.

A beautiful new light and airy Outpatient Department will house the remarkable work of The Leprosy Mission in Bihar. Patients will be able to receive a comfortable level of care in the new safe, spacious and clinical environment.

Reduction of the flooding risk will allow doctors and nurses to focus on their medical work without fear of their houses flooding every monsoon.

Guy then continued his talk with the story of Rajisha.....

Rajisha



Rajisha lives with her parents and three siblings in their home in Nirmali, in the poorest region of India. She enjoys school and loves to learn. At 18 she should be taking her final exams and looking forward to a bright future. However, Rajisha cannot see beyond the next 21 days. Then, she will have her cast removed that covers her hand and lower arm. Although she is clinging to the hope of returning to a normal life, she is taking each day as it comes.

A short while ago Rajisha began to notice changes to her body that she didn't understand. Strange marks appeared on her face and her fingers began to feel stiff and bend inwards. She had a bad open sore on her finger that just wouldn't heal. She felt unsettled and afraid. Thankfully for Rajisha her parents were able to take her to a doctor visiting her village, he broke the news that Rajisha had leprosy.

Rajisha will never forget the moment she discovered she had leprosy. When the doctor gave her the diagnosis, she felt her world become enveloped in darkness.

Rajisha started the antibiotics to cure the disease. But the damage to her nerves had already been done. Her fingers became so clawed that she couldn't feed herself. She needed reconstructive surgery to regain her mobility.

But her doctor gave her hope. There was a place where she could get the treatment she needed: Muzaffarpur Hospital.

Reaching the hospital wasn't easy though. Rajisha had to travel over 100km without her parents. Her mother was too unwell to travel, and her father couldn't afford to take time off work. Just when she needed her family the most, she was all alone.

When she finally reached Muzaffarpur hospital, she stood anxiously outside the crumbling OPD department for hours. There was nowhere to sit inside. The heat was oppressive. The wait was almost unbearable. Rajisha was exhausted.

Eventually, Rajisha saw a doctor who admitted her to the hospital. She got the reconstructive surgery she needed to straighten her fingers. This time, she didn't go through it alone. She found friends to encourage her as she recovered, and the nurses were always on hand to reassure her. If it weren't for Muzaffarpur Hospital, Rajisha would be facing a very different future.

From this incredible hospital, the love of Jesus shines out for miles around. People affected by leprosy are not the last and the least here. They are seen, welcomed, and accepted. The medical care they so urgently need is given freely.

The tireless staff at Muzaffarpur see up to 600 outpatients each day. Like Rajisha, many will have travelled long distances to get treatment. The doctors and nurses never turn anyone away.

Together, we can ensure that Muzaffarpur Hospital continues to provide comfort and care to every person affected by leprosy that comes through its doors.

You can restore the Outpatients Department at Muzaffarpur. You can make sure that people affected by leprosy are seen, welcomed and loved.

Your gift of just £36 will provide a tonne of bricks for the restoration, and £188 would supply two tonnes of cement.

Your support isn't just about building materials. It's about rebuilding lives too. You'll be giving people like Rajisha a chance to live without fear, stigma, or pain.

You can create a world where no one has to suffer in silence or isolation because of leprosy.

The Leprosy Mission Prayer-

Almighty Father, the giver of life and health,
look mercifully on those who suffer from leprosy.
Stretch out your hand to touch and heal them
as Jesus did during his earthly life.

Grant wisdom and insight to those who are seeking
the prevention and cure of the disease.
Give skill and sympathy to those who minister to the
patients.

Reunite the separated with their families and
friends.

And inspire your people with the task set before The
Leprosy Mission that it may never lack the staff or
the means to carry on its healing work,
in accordance with your will, and to the glory of your
name.

We ask this for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

If you have any queries or want more information please contact Muriel F. as our local Leprosy Mission representative.

During the service, Kath took me right back to my younger years! (too many decades ago to count). I can remember Mum having one of the little L shaped collection boxes provided by Joyce Rowley, the then Leprosy Mission representative. She kept it on the window sill in the kitchen and all our loose change was solemnly deposited.

Once a month Mr Nash, the milkman, came with his young son, Peter to collect the money for our milk. Any loose change from the transaction was duly deposited in the leper box which Mum would shake so that Peter would ask his dad for money to put into the box as well!

How strange that many years later my daughter, Jo-Anne would marry Stephen whose best friend just happened to be Peter! Peter was best man at their wedding and later Godfather to the twins, Emmeline and Annabelle, baptised here at St Chad's.



February Services:

- 18th - Holy Communion Rev Barry
- 25th - Morning Prayer KH/MF

March Services:

- 3rd—Family Service Kath and team
- 10th—Mothering Sunday
- Family Praise and Prayer
- 17th- Holy Communion Rev Barry
- 24th—Palm Sunday
- 29th - Good Friday
- 31st- Easter Sunday



Dates for your diary:

Tuesday 27th February—Meeting of the social committee at the home of Barbara and Peter at 2pm. All welcome. If you have any ideas for social and/or fund raising events please let myself, Kath or Muriel know.

Sunday 10th March—Mothering Sunday
Family Praise and Prayer

Monday 11th March—Zoom PCC meeting

Saturday 23rd March—Church and churchyard clean up

Sunday 28th April - APCM(AGM) after the service.

LEEK FOODBANK—

OUR SHOPPING LIST

- LONGLIFE SEMI-SKIMMED MILK
- INSTANT MASH/TINNED POTATOES
- TINNED MEAT/TINNED FISH
- TINNED VEGETABLES
- PASTA SAUCE
- TINNED FRUIT
- RICE PUDDING/TINNED CUSTARD
- SPONGE PUDDINGS (NON-REFRIGERABLE)
- FRUIT SQUASH
- TOMATO KETCHUP
- RICE - MICROWAVEABLE POUCHES AND 500GM BAGS
- INSTANT NOODLES AND INSTANT PASTA
- JAM
- CHOCOLATE BARS AND CHOCOLATE BISCUITS
- COFFEE - 100GM AND 200GM JARS
- MULTI-PURPOSE CLEANING SPRAY
- CLEANING CLOTHS
- WASHING UP LIQUID
- LAUNDRY LIQUID/CAPSULES
- HAIR SHAMPOO & CONDITIONER
- SHOWER GEL AND SOAP
- DEODORANT - MALE AND FEMALE
- TOILET ROLLS
- TOOTHPASTE AND TOOTHBRUSHES
- SHAVING FOAM AND RAZORS
- NAPPIES
- CAT AND DOG FOOD

Smiles

A Sunday school teacher asked her class, "What was Jesus' mother's name?" One child answered, "Mary." The teacher then asked, "who knows what Jesus' father's name was?" A little lad answered "Verge." Confused, the teacher asked, "Where did you get that?" The kid said, "Well, you know, they are always talking about Verge n' Mary."

A little boy was overheard praying: "Lord, if you can't make me a better boy, don't worry about it. I'm having a real good time like I am."

I had been teaching my three-year old daughter, Caitlin, the Lord's Prayer for several evenings at bedtime. She would repeat after me the lines from the prayer. Finally, she decided to go solo. I listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer: "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us from E-mail."

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, "And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?" One bright little girl replied, "Because people are sleeping."

3-year-old Reese: "Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name. Amen."

After the christening of his baby brother in church, Jason sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That preacher said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I wanted to stay with you."



**PLANNING APPLICATION FOR 170 ACRE SOLAR FARM
YOUR OPINIONS ARE IMPORTANT
DECISION DATE NOW DEFERRED UNTIL 23RD MAY 2024
COMMENTS 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO BE IN TIME FOR PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT**

- There are planning applications at SMDC to turn approx. 250 acres of Green Belt into a huge solar panel farm, with separate battery storage applications. This application alone is for 170 acres.
- If approved, it will be the largest solar panel farm passed by any local planning authority in the UK. All situated in our Green Belt.
- This is on our doorstep – located on a rising slope leading to the highest point summit of Rownall Ridge, which at 1000ft above sea level will be highly visible
- Running immediately adjacent to Thorney Edge Road for over half a kilometre.
- It will be a lasting scar on our local landscape
- Please look at the full planning application here including maps of the sites. You will be surprised by how extensive it is.

<http://publicaccess.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/portal/servlets/ApplicationSearchServlet?PKID=175025>

